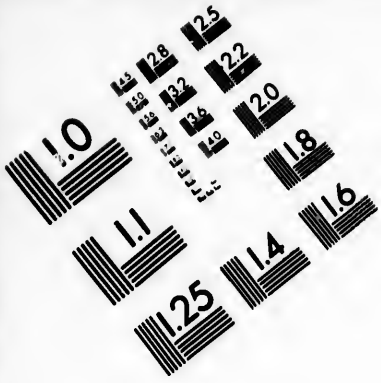

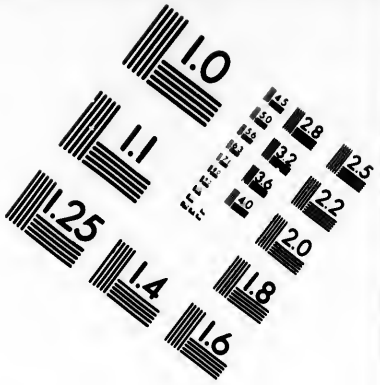

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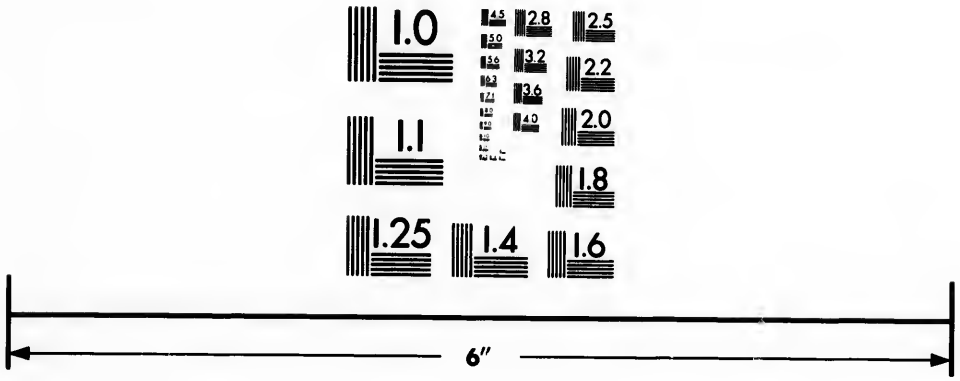

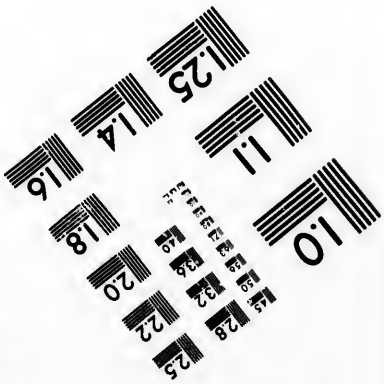

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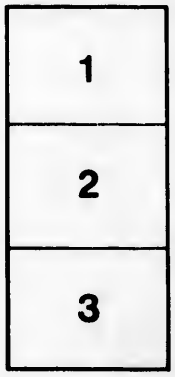

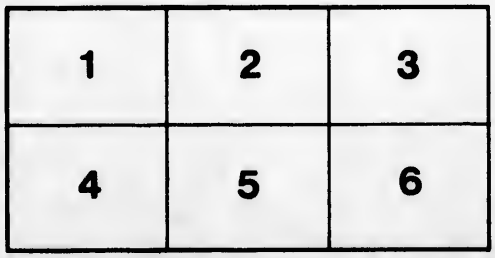

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THE BOOK-KEEPER.

AND

A TRANSLATION

FROM

THE GERMAN OF "SCHILLER."

BY MERCATOR,

Member of the Natural History Society of Montreal.

27881
17. 10. 32

MONTREAL:
DAWSON BROTHERS, GREAT ST. JAMES STREET.
1868.

Entered according to Act of Parliament by Dawson Brothers.

TO

GEORGE PEABODY, ESQ.,

THE FOLLOWING POEM,

THE BOOK KEEPER,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED IN MEMORY OF HIS NOBLE DONATION
TO THE POOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Montreal, December, 1867.

The Book-keeper.

'TIS pleasant to view the stately hall,
As it towering stands in the grey of dawn;
Or the long shadows thrown by its massive wall
From the slanting rays on the summer morn—
Or again, when thunder growls in ire,
And lightning darts the tongue of fire,
To see it defy, with aspect proud,
The threat of the lowering tempest cloud;

Or yet again, when the winter's snow
Lies deep on the ground, and the leafless trees
Moan and lament, in murmurings low,
Their foliage lost, as the bare limbs freeze—
Then the mansion looks down with haughty mien,
What cares it about the world without,
And it laughs at the blast,
As the wind shrieks past,
For the fire burns cheerly and warm within.

Now gone is the bold, defiant frown,
And haughty scorn appears no more,
But friendly and cheerful the mansion looks down,
As a carriage drives up to the wide hall-door.

The rich man enters his princely home,
With happy smiles the graceful dame,
And gleeful rejoicings the children come,
And for him is the fond endearing name,
And his the loving sweet caress;
Of all he owns, what treasures rare,
What hoarded wealth with this compare?
For the rich man is poor who does not possess
The prize of domestic happiness.

How fares it with the man by fortune tried?
What does the touchstone of success lay bare?
Shrinks the false heart? naught but vain tinselled pride?
Or is it sterling worth that glitters there?

Griefs, like ballast in a ship, the mind
Oft steady, but too many joys
Careen the intellect, as sudden gusts of wind
O'erset the vessel and leave wreck behind
Unless that wisdom's keel preserves the equipoise.

Through the deepening shades of the summer night
Comes a joyous and merry sound;
The mansion within seems filled with light,
And the windows ablaze send sparkling rays
To spread the lively mirth around.
And elegant wealth makes holiday,
For fortune's smiles are there.
The spacious rooms are bright and gay

With beauteous forms of maidens fair.
Works of art and sculpture vie
With dresses rich and jewellery,
The cultured taste to gratify.
Whatever wealth can bring to please,
Or to make perfect luxurious ease,
Those tasteful rooms display.

The humming-bird's feathers are brilliant, the hue
Of the deep tinted ruby and amethyst blue,
From its dark plumage fitfully gleams,
As hovering poised, it doth daintily feed,
Or suddenly darting with arrow swift speed,
It sporteth all day mid' the joyous sunbeams.

In torrents of sweetness the exquisite note
Streams forth from the mocking-bird's quivering throat
As the praises of nature it sings;
And gorgeous with colour the butterflies' wings
As the nectar-fed insects in luxury float.

The beaver constructeth its dwelling with skill;
The ants plan their city and fashion the hill,
Instructed by instinct, in harmony toil,
Their numbers uniting—with fruits of the soil
And provision their granaries fill.

The bee is not slothful and toils not alone,
For himself and his fellows he storeth the hive,
And on the rich honey they pleasantly live,
When the warm days of summer are gone,

And the cold blast sweeps by
Then unsheltered must die,
The selfish, improvident drone.

Again the proud mansion is filled with light,
And welcoming rays from the windows fall,
The tables are spread, and a festive sight
Is displayed in the noble banqueting hall,
And worthily fortune's favoured son
Presides, and sees with grateful pride,
As his guests partake of each costly dish,
That every want and fastidious wish
In the banquet's profusion is satisfied.

The rich wine quickens the generous throes
Of the heart, and gaily the converse flows,
Toast and sentiment, jest and song,
Mirthful revelry still prolong;
Pleasantly smiling the swift hours glide
As the feast goes merrily on.

'Tis well when wealth by fortune sent
With liberal hand is wisely spent.
To gratify but one man's greed
Is foul abuse of fortune's kind intent,
For poorer neighbours thoughtfully to care
And her rich blessings readily to share
With those who, favoured less, have greater need.

Few things in life so sweet as that reward,
When willing hand and thoughtful brain,
From the warm heart the inspiration gain,
And friends and fellowmen the worthy deeds
applaud.

'Tis well when the generous thoughts of the mind,
In generous deeds expression find;
The heart to prompt—the brain to plan—
The power and means to serve mankind,
Not for ourselves alone are given,
But gifts are they bestowed by heaven
In trust for our fellow man.

The book-keeper sits at his desk on high,
In the realms of light above the sky,

And fairly inscribes, from birth to death,
The deeds men do in the world beneath.
Piled around account-books vast
Contain the records of the past,
Since Adam felt transgression's pain,
And wrathful Cain shed Abel's blood,
Of all who've lived—the bad and good—
Of those who've strived the prize to gain
Or proof against temptation stood,
And those who've lived—but lived in vain.—

'Tis grievous to view the wretched abode,
As it stands out forlorn in the landscape bright,
When the morning awakens the country road,
And the birds are trilling their notes of delight,

And the trees refreshed with the past night's rest,
Softly rustle their leaves in the cool early breeze;
And the green grass below, and the blue sky above,
Are telling of harmony, friendship, and love;
And all things raise the hymn of praise;
But the hovel shrinks back from the sun's bright ray.
Alone it stands there, in that landscape so fair,
A picture of misery, age and decay.

Forth from his wretched lair—he comes,
A being clothed with human form,
As a dark cloud clothing tempestuous storm;
Into the music breathing balmy air

He comes, nor heeds the sweet melodious charm,
Repels her love, scorns her caresses warm,
And nature's proffered joys disdains to share.

Sullen his aspect—stern the knitted brow—
The pale and haggard features show
Nature's avenging signs.
Enduring marks by passion worn
Deep in the flesh—unsightly lines
Of joy repelling scorn.

Oft has he tempted fortune, but with ill success,
Therefore his soul is filled with bitterness;
And thoughts, by faith and patience unrepressed,
Of murderous hatred harbour in his breast.

Therefore the soothing charm melodious greets
Vainly his ear, and on his gloomy sight,
As everywhere his eye rejoicing nature meets,
Hatefully falls the sun's unwelcome light.

Unsympathising, and alone,
He goes his way—
Invisible but near,
With eyes (although not seen)
That search and sear
With lurid evil glare,
Like vulture o'er expiring prey
Grimly watches hideous fierce despair
To claim him for her own.

Patience is like a citadel of strength,
Beset by foes, that hardship undergoes,
And much privation loyally endures,
Which being borne and overcome, at length
The victory secures—
But Passion in the open plain
Against a multitude contends,
The unequal battle in defeat soon ends,
And leaves the victim to deplore in vain
That reason's curb did not
The wild career restrain.

The Angel still ever with busy quill,
Does page on page with entries fill;

Deeds done in faith's ne'er failing might,
To serve the God of love and light,
Are entered there upon the right;
But hateful acts, bereft
Of sympathy and kindly thought,
Of pride and self-indulgence taught,
Are entered on the left.

The humble, earnest, faithful prayer,
Which from the soul in worship flows,
Direct to the throne of mercy goes,
And is not entered there.

Each one that breathes of human race
Has, in that ledger's ample space,
His or her allotted place.

And the work goes steadily on alway,
By day and night—in the realms of light
Night is as day—there is no night.

Broken the link!—No more the sounds
Of joy are heard through the spacious halls;
No longer the mansion gaily resounds
With the voice of mirth—but the massive walls,
In silent pride and cheerless gloom,
Stand like a barrier striving to hide
The grief within from the world outside.
The choking sob and outcry wild,
Are borne on the air from the darkened room,

Where the prostrate form lies stiff and cold.
The sweet caresses of wife and child,
The treasured wealth and shining gold,
No flush can bring to that colourless face
Nor yet to that motionless form can give,
Nor pride, nor pleasure, nor power to live.
No more rich prizes from fortune to win,
For the beating pulse its measured pace
Has stayed, and the life-blood ceased to flow.
The deeds of worth and works of sin,
Alike are ended for weal or woe:
And the hoarse wind murmurs the tidings dread
Its low cries say, as it speeds on its way,
That the master within lies dead!

From the mansion's wide hall-door,
Along the well-known road,
A stately carriage conveys once more
Fortune's favoured son.
As the horses draw the lifeless load
To the entrance gate of death's abode,
The death-bell calls, with solemn tone,
Come to the grave! your day is gone!
Come, come, to death's dark home!
Come, sleeper, come!

Above, in the realms of light,
The angel writes in the glittering page;
In the space allotted from youth to age

The figures left and right
Are added—and under—stands the amount
Lost and gained in a *life's account.*
And the angel beholds from the throne of grace,
Of mercy and love, on high
A sign as it flashes suddenly,
Like the gleam of a meteor's vivid flame
When it shoots o'er the cloudless sky,
And brighter with joy is that heavenly face,
As he writes on the page the glorious name
Of Him who died on Calvary.
But again—and there comes no answering sign
To that eager look, from the throne divine;

No flashing meteor gleams;

But a *shadow* falls athwart the page,

That lustrous eye no longer beams

With joy, and the heavenly face

Is clouded with sadness, as under the space

Allotted for trial from youth to age,

The angel draws a deep black line.

Now the page is sealed with the signet cross;

How stands the account?

Is it Profit?—or Loss?

'Tis a pleasure great on an autumn's eve
To stand on some eminence high,
And watch the Sun of the Earth take leave
In a clear Canadian sky.
As near the horizon the Father of day
Majestically sinks in the west,
A glorious proof of the power of light
He gives to the Earth in the marvellous pla;
Of colour and beauty, in varied array,
Displayed to the wondering sight
Of her creatures, e're yet, for a season of rest,
He leaves them the dark silent night—

Beauty and harmony, in perfect form expressed,
Whether through ear or eye, to healthy mind addressed,
Senses and mind with heavenly bliss surround,
Fire with exultant joy, the ardent throbbing breast,
Or fill the soul with peace and happiness profound.

See !—How behind yon crimson cloud
Whence the declining sun, now hidden, throws
In radiant waves the colour giving light,
Intense the rays with dazzling brightness blaze,
Superb the sky with brilliant colour glows ;
The strains of heavenly joy and triumph proud
Thrill through the soul, as on the ravished sight
The hues resplendent crowd—

'Tis like a glorious anthem writ
In colour on the firmament
The theme—Creation—lauding and praising still
The majesty, the love and wondrous skill
Of Him who made the world so beautiful.

O'er earth and sky the solemn night extends
Her sombre, deepening shade,
And grateful calm repose to weary nature sends;
Colours, shapes and outlines clear,
Which painted by the light the varied landscape made,
Grow dim; then one by one the objects fade,
And in the gathering darkness disappear,
As the black curtain inch by inch descends.

Symbol of death! that curtain drawn between
Lives spent, worn out and gone,—
Things that once *were*, but now *have been*,
God-like forms of flesh and bone,
Where life and reason's light once shone,
Now seen by memory's sight alone—
Sad records of the past ;
And through the dense obscurity
By faith yet dimly seen—
Borne on by time's ne'er ceasing flight,
With hope and expectation bright,
Ever more near, approaching fast—
Life's Futurity.

And now the dark shadows envelope yon mound
Where prostrate walls and scattered stones
Still tell of the past, and, like mouldering bones,
Disfigure and cumber the ground
Where a mansion, once towering toward the skies,
A mass of unsightly ruin lies.

INTRODUCTION

TO

SCHILLER'S 'SONG OF THE BELL."

IN venturing to publish the following translation of a part of Schiller's "Song (or Lay) of the Bell," a few brief remarks on the peculiar characteristics of the poem may not be unacceptable to those who are debarred the pleasure of reading it in the original German.

The church bell, from its association with the most important events which happen to each individual in the ordinary course of life, as well as from its connection with religious duties and impressions, is in most civilized countries regarded with a feeling of some

degree of veneration; and it is not surprising that this should be more especially the case with an imaginative and thoughtful people, such as the Germans.

The church-bell is (or was in Germany) frequently used to communicate the glad tidings of the birth of a child; its merry peals take part in the rejoicings of the wedding; and again its mournful toll appears to lament the final departure of the mortal whose participation in the affairs of this life has come to an end. It, moreover, sounds the alarm at the outbreak of fire, and also periodically reminds people of the appointed time to unite in public worship.

The subject of the poem, however, is one of those bells of great size, the possession of which conferred even some degree of note on the town or place to which it belonged, and the reader may be reminded that in the age referred to in the poem, the casting of one of those large bells was, from the quantity and

costliness of the material, as well as from the uncertainty as to success in the operation, a very anxious and serious undertaking.

Schiller has then selected the casting of one of these bells as the subject of a poem, and assuming the master-founder to be a very thoughtful and religious character, has put into his mouth the reflections which might be supposed likely to occur to such a man engaged in an undertaking intended to have so close a connection with the lives and affairs of many people, not only his contemporaries, but also from its durability with those of future generations.

The subject is explained, or rather announced, in a few opening lines, after which the master-founder proceeds to give the necessary directions to the workmen, the time between each stage of the process being occupied with the reflections and thoughts before alluded to.

The choice and arrangement of the words are varied with extraordinary skill, so as to harmonize with the varying phases of the subject; in one place, directions are given to the workmen in plain and familiar language; in another, the bustling activity of a person engaged in the restless business of life is suggested; the ideas of joy, grief, and terror, are indicated somewhat in the same way as in a fine descriptive piece of music, amplifying and intensifying the actual meaning conveyed by the words alone. Short, energetic sentences, sudden breaks, and a sort of clashing effect in the rhythm, together with a crowding of imagery, in the description of a fire at night, brings vividly before the mind the confusion and incidents usually attending such a disaster; or again, when the bell is described as tolling, the solemn effect is conveyed, and even the sound almost imitated, in the few sonorous lines of the German. Some sur-

prise may be felt that this poem has not been chosen as a subject by any of the great German musical composers. Recitative, solo and chorus, may be said to spontaneously suggest themselves in reading the poem.

Das Lied von der Glocke.

Vivos voco
Mortuos plango
Fulgura frango.

Fest gemauert in der Erden
Steht die Form aus Lehm gebrannt;
Heute muss die Glocke werden,
Frisch, Gesellen! seid zur Hand
Von der Stirne heiss
Rinnen muss der Schweis,
Soll das Werk den Meister loben;
Doch der Segen kommt von oben—

TRANSLATION OF (PART OF)

Schiller's Song of the Bell.

I dwell aloft above the ground;
I call the living,
And the dead bewail;
Loud the alarm I sound
When flames burst forth,
Or threatening foes assail.

In the ground fast built and steady
Stands the mould of well-burnt clay,
Now, my lads, be each one ready,
We fail, or cast the bell to-day,
From the glowing brow
Streaming sweat must flow,
Let all be done to win success,
And, from above, may grace our labour bless—

Zum Werke, das wir ernst bereiten
Geziemt sich wohl ein ernstes Wort;
Wenn gute Reden sie begleiten,
Dann fliesst die Arbeit munter fort.
So lasst uns getzt mit Fleiss betrachten,
Was durch die swache Kraft entspringt;
Den schlechten Mann muss mann verachten,
Der nie bedacht, was er vollbringt.
Das ist's ja, was den Menschen zieret
Und dazu ward ihm der verstand,
Dass er im innern Herzen spüret
Was er erschafft mit seiner Hand.

Works which a serious purpose claim,
Serious thoughts may rightly ask;
When thoughtful words direct the aim,
Goes cheerfully on the pleasing task.
So let us with attention scan
That which our feeble strength brings forth;
Men should despise the thoughtless man
Who lowly prizes reason's worth;
To man alone the gift of thought
Belongs, the power to understand
The purpose of the labour by him wrought,
The thing created with his own right-hand.

Nehmet Holz von Fichtenstamme,
Doch recht trocken lasst es sein,
Dass die eingepresste Flamme
Schlage zu dem Schwalch hinein!
Kocht des Kupfers Brei,
Schnell das Zinn herbei,
Dass die zähe Glockenspeise
Fliesse nach der rechten Weisse.

Was in des Dammes tiefer Grube
Die Hand mit Feures Hülfe baut
Hoch auf des Thurmes Glockenstube
Da wird es von uns zeugen laut;

Feed the furnace now with pine-wood,
But be sure 'tis very dry,
That the draught, within the hood
Force the fierce flames searchingly.
The coppery ores begin
To fuse, quick add the tin!
That the viscid bell-paste so
Right prepared may smoothly flow.

What in the dark pit hidden now,
Our hands prepare with aid of fire,
Shall to the listening world below
Our praise declare from lofty spire;

Noch dauern wird's in späten Tagen
Und rühren vieler Menschen Ohr
Und wird mit dem Betrübten Klagen
Und stimmen zu der Andacht Chor
Was unten tief dem Erdensohne
Das wechselnde Verhängniss bringt
Das schlägt an die metallne Krone
Die es erbaulich weiter klingt.

Weisse Blasen seh' ich springen
Wohl! die Massen sind im Fluss.
Lasst's mit Aschensalz durchdringen
Das befördert schnell den Guss.

And through ages long vibrating,
Sound the sympathetic stroke;
Still the bereaved one's woe relating,
Or sinners to their prayers invoke.
Griefs and joys mankind surrounding,
Which ever changing fortunes bring,
Still on the sonorous metal sounding
Far and wide instructive ring.

Frothy bladders rising fast
On the seething mass appear;
Now let us, to prepare the cast,
With potash salt the fluid clear.

Auch von Schaume rein
Muss die Mischung sein
Dass vom reinlichen Metalle
Rein und voll die Stimme schalle.

Denn mit der Freude Feierklange
Begrüsst sie das geliebte Kind
Auf seines Lebens erstem Gange,
Den es in Schlafes Arm beginnt;
Ihm ruhen noch im Zeitenschoose
Die schwarzen und die heitern Loose;
Der mutterliebe zarte Sorgen
Bewachen seinen goldnen Morgen—

From all scum quite free

Must the mixture be;

For from metal pure alone

Mellow and clear will ring the tone.

With peals of mirth and sounds of joy

Greet ye the birth of the darling boy,

Whose earliest hours on life's high way

In sleep's soft arms glide smooth away;

For him yet in time's bosom lies

Hardship's lot or fortune's prize.

Maternal love with anxious fears,

The child through dawn of boyhood rears—

Die Jahre fliehen pfeilgeschwind.
Vom Mädschen reisst sich stolz der Knabe,
Er stürmt ins Leben wild hinaus,
Durchmisst die Welt am Wanderstabe,
Fremd kehrt er heim ins Vaterhous;
Und herrlich, in der Jugend prangen,
Wie ein Gebild aus Himmelshöhn,
Mit züchtigen, verschämten Wangen
Sieht er die Jungfrau vor sich stehn;
Da fasst ein namenloses Sehnen
Des Jünglings Herz, er irrt allein,
Aus seinen Augen brechen Thränen,
Er flieht der Brüder wilden Reihn,
Erröthend folgt er ihren Spuren

With arrow speed the years flee past,
The nurse's care the youth, disdainful, spurns;
He plunges eager into life's wild foam,
And mingling in the world, at length returns
To the paternal roof, a stranger, home;
And lovely, blooming in her youthful days,
Like some fair form of heavenly joy,
There stands, before his ardent gaze,
The blushing maiden coy—
Sudden a subtle longing thrills
The lad's young heart, he wanders then
Pensive alone, his thoughts her image fills;
Shunning the rude society of men,
He follows where her footsteps lead,

Und ist von ihrem Gruss beglückt,
Das Schönste sucht er auf den Fluren,
Womit er seine Liebe schmückt.
O! zarte Sehnsucht, süsses Hoffen,
Der ersten Liebe goldne Zeit!
Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen,
Es schwelgt das Herz in Seligkeit;
O! das sie ewig grünen bliebe
Die schöne Zeit der jungen Liebe!

Wie sich schon die Pfeifen bräunen!
Dieses Stäbchen tauch' ich ein,
Sehn wir's überglast erscheinen,
Wird's zum Gusse zeitig sein.

To win her smiles fatigue is gaily borne;
The sweetest flowers that blossom on the mead
He seeks wherewith the loved one to adorn.
O! tender passion, golden time,
Of ardent love with hope so bright,
Then opens to the eye the heaven sublime,
Revels the soul in exquisite delight;
O! that ever fresh t'would stay
The early bloom of love's young May.

See, the gassy fumes grow brown,
Now this rod I plunge within;
Should the surface glazed become,
Then the casting may begin.

Jetzt, Gesellen, frisch!
Prüst mir das Gemisch,
Ob das Spröde mit dem Weichen
Sich vereint zum guten Zeichen.

Denn wo das Strenge mit dem Zarten,
Wo Starkes sich und Mildes paarten,
Da gibt es einen guten Klang.
Drum prüse, wer sich ewig bindet,
Ob sich das Herz zum Herzen findet!
Der Wahn ist kurz, die Reu' ist lang.
Lieblich in der Bräute Locken
Spielt der jungfräuliche Kranz,
Wenn die hellen Kirchenglocken

Now, my lads, we'll by
This proof the mixture try.
If the brittle parts unite
With the tough, then all goes right.

Where force with tendernesss we find,
Where *gentleness* with *strength* combined,
There rings the true and faultless tone.
Prove well, ere bound with wedlock's chain,
If heart to heart respond again,
Illusive passion soon is gone,
The links, once joined, remain.
Lovely in the maiden's tresses,
Plays the spotless bridal flower

Laden zu des Festes Glanz,

Ach! des Lebens schönste Feier

Endigt auch den Lebens—Mai

Mit dem Gürtel mit dem Schleier

Reisst der schöne Wahn entzwei.

Die Leidenschaft flieht,

Die Liebe muss bleiben;

Die Blume verblüht,

Die Frucht muss treiben.

Der Mann muss hinaus

ins feindliche Leben,

Muss wirken und streben,

When the merry church bell blesses
And proclaims the joyful hour.
Ah ! life's choicest holiday
Ending with life's early spring,
The nuptial hours soon pass away
The sweet illusion vanishing.
The passion goes by,
The love must remain ;
The flower must die,
The fruit to obtain.
The man must without,
To work and toil,
'Mid life's turmoil,

Und pflanzen und schaffen,

Erlisten, erraffen,

Muss wetten und wagen

Das Glück zu erjagen.

Da strömet herbei die unendliche Gabe,

Es füllt sich der Speicher mit köstlicher Habe ;

Die Räume wachsen, es dehnt sich das Haus.

Und drinnen waltet

Die zûchtige Hausfrau,

Die mutter der Kinder,

Und herrschet weise

Im häuslichen Kreise

In planning and doing
Perfecting, pursuing,
Must earnestly strive
His utmost to thrive;
Thus winning prosperity, measure by measure,
His coffers keep steadily filling with treasure,
The rooms increase, the house spreads out,
And the woman within,
Must her duties begin
In managing there,
With motherly care
And orderly rule,
The nursery school,

Und lehret die Mädchen
Und wehret den Knaben,
Und reget ohn' Ende
Die fleissigen Hände
Und mehrt den Gewinn
Mit ordnendem Sinn,
Und füllet mit Schätzen die duftenden Laden,
Und dreht um die schnurrende Spindel den Faden,
Und sammelt im reinlich geglätteten Schrein,
Die schimmernde Wolle, den schneeichten Lein,
Und füget zum Guten den Glanz und den Schimmer,
Und ruhet nimmer.

In watching and teaching
The boys and the girls,
Employed without ceasing,
Her hands ever busy
She lessens expense
By her motherly sense,
And she fills with her treasures
The sweet scented cases,
And winds off the thread
As the spinning-wheel races,
And neatly arranges the shining shelves full,
The snowy white linen and glittering wool,
And in tasteful display a good purpose seeks ever,
And wearies never.

Und der Vater, mit frohem Blick,
Von des Hauses weitschauendem Giebel,
Ueberzählet sein blühend Glück:
Siehet der Pfosten ragende Bäume,
Und der Scheunen gefüllte Räume,
Und die Speicher, vom Segen gebogen,
Und des Kornes bewegte Wogen;
Rühmt sich mit stolzem Mund:
Fest, wie der Erde Grund,
Gegen des Unglücks Macht
Steht mir des Hauses' Pracht!
Doch mit des Geschickes' Mächten
Ist kein ew'ger Bund zu flechten.
Und das Unglück schreitet schnell.

And the father, with joyful eye,
Surveying the prospect before him wide spread,
Takes note of his prosperity.
He sees the timber-yielding trees,
And his well-filled granaries;
The barns with harvest fruits weighed down,
And waving, like billows, the growing corn;
Exulting thinks, with swelling pride,
Firm as the solid wall,
Even against misfortune's tide,
Securely stands the stately hall.
But 'gainst the dark decrees of fate
Can mortal man no compact make—
Disaster strides apace.

Wohl! nun kann der Guss beginnen
Schön gezacket ist der Bruch;
Doch bevor wir's lassen rinnen,
Betet einen frommen Spruch!
Stosst den Zapfen aus!
(Gott bewahr' das Haus!)
Rauchend in des Henkels Bogen
Schiesst's mit feuerbraunen Wogen.

* * *

Von dem Dome
Schwer und bang
Tönt die Glocke
Grabgesang;
Ernst begleiten ihre Trauerschläge
Einen wandrer auf dem letzen Wege.

Now may the casting be begun,

Well the brittle fibres spread!

But before we let it run,

Let a solemn prayer be said.

Strike the fosset loose!

(God befriend the house!)

Into the hollow, wrapped in steam,

Shoots the seething fiery stream.

* * *

From on high

Sounds the bell,

Deep and solemn

Tolls the knell;

Tidings these sad sounds convey,

A traveller journeys death's highway.